THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

# MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840].

"*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us*" (HEB. 12: 1).

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## WHAT IS FAITH?

(*Concluded from page 37.*)

Let us now consider a few Scripture patterns of faith. They will teach us, more clearly than words can, what faith really means.

In the life of Abraham, the father of the faithful, we see that faith does not mean blind, unreasoning obedience. Faith reasons. It has a logic of its own, an argument which is irrefutable. Abraham had been given the divine assurance that through the lineage of Isaac he should become the father of uncountable multitudes. He believed this promise. But then came the divine command that seemed to contradict all that had been pronounced of Isaac. What confusion was this? If the command to sacrifice the son of promise was carried out, how could the promises be fulfilled? Faith took hold of this terrible problem and solved it, no doubt after a most valiant struggle and anguish of heart on the part of the Patriarch. Faith reasoned: "God is able to raise him up from the dead." It was thus that the contradiction was satisfactorily explained but by an argument that nothing but faith would have found. And yet it was sound logic. God is able to do what He promises, even in the face of death. The greatest minds the world has ever seen have been believers. For faith is reason. Only the fools say in their hearts that there is no God.

Faith is seeing. Faith is not blind. Only he who has his spiritual eyes opened so that he comprehends the relation between the visible and invisible worlds can have true faith, and the clearer his spiritual sight is the stronger is his faith. You remember the story of the Prophet Elisha at Dothan. The King of Syria had planned an invasion of the territory of Israel. But the Prophet told the King of Israel of the plans of the Syrian King,

and they were, therefore, frustrated. Then the King of Syria decided to capture the Prophet as a first war measure, and when he learned that Elisha was at Dothan he sent a large force to carry out his order. The place was surrounded. When the servant of the Prophet arose in the morning and saw the hostile army, he feared greatly. It meant death. Perhaps torture. But the Prophet was not alarmed. Through faith he saw what was hidden to the eyes of the servant. He had the faith that penetrates the veil, and as a consequence he saw the heavenly guard surrounding him. "Fear not," he said, to his servant, "for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." And then he bowed down before his God in prayer. He asked God to open the eyes of his trembling servant "that he may see." And the prayer was heard in high heaven. The veil was lifted, and the servant saw what the Prophet had seen from the beginning, that the hill upon which the city was built was "full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha" (II. Kings 6: 8-23).

One of the lessons of this little item of sacred history is this, that no matter how real the spiritual world may be, it can only be perceived by those whose vision has been opened so that they can see the realities that exist. It is the same with the physical world. He who is blind cannot perceive it. Form and color do not exist to him. The entire world of the microscope is non-existent to all except those who are armed with the proper instruments.

A great deal of unbelief comes from spiritual blindness. Saul, blind, was a persecutor. When he saw, he became a disciple. Stephen saw the glory of God, where the persecutors saw nothing. The testimony of faith does not rest upon cunningly devised fables, but "that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you" (I. John 1: 3). Such is the foundation of faith. It rests not upon hearsay, but upon testimony.

A chief characteristic of true faith in God is this, that it makes him whose soul is filled with it extremely sensitive of the honor and glory of the Deity in whom the trust has been placed. This lesson is beautifully taught in the history of Ezra. This remarkable leader of men decided to avail himself of the permission given by Artaxerxes to the exiles in Babylon to return to Palestine to rebuild the Temple and the holy city. So he gathered a little company of his people who were willing to make the journey with him. He had a gracious letter from the Emperor granting him permission to head this enterprise; and not only that, but also permission to take with him a valuable treasure consisting of gold and silver and vessels of precious metals, for the service of Jehovah in the ancient capital of Judea.

Let us try to realize as well as we can the situation in which Ezra now was. He had a little company of perhaps less than two thousand men, and a journey before him through a wilderness in which there roamed strong bands of outlaws, always ready to

rob travelers who were not sufficiently strong to resist them. He had a treasure to take care of, which was very valuable, and which must have attracted the attention of highwaymen. What would any of us have done under similar circumstances? What did Ezra do? He had, probably, not a warrior in the entire company. What could he do? We read in the Book of Ezra that he commenced his journey, with his little company of fellow-travelers. When they came to the river that runneth to Ahava, just before starting on the really dangerous part of the journey, they halted, and the leader proclaimed a fast. For three days they fasted and prayed. The question before Ezra was: Are we to undertake this journey without military escort, or does not prudence, does not common sense bid us to ask the King for soldiers to guard us and the treasure we are carrying? That was the problem with which their faith was wrestling in prayer and fasting. And this is how that problem looked from the point of view of faith. Ezra says: "For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, the hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him" (Ezra 8: 22).

It is not difficult to read between the lines here. The King had undoubtedly tried to persuade Ezra that his undertaking was impracticable without the aid of the military power of the land. But Ezra had argued that Jehovah was stronger than the army, and that He would protect them. This is very easy to say when the matter is not put to a practical test. Now Ezra was about to be be tested. And he stood the test. After fasting and prayer he decided to trust in God, that the honor and glory might be God's, and not man's. He decided to trust in God both for guidance and defense.

Consider this magnificent instance of faith in God. Most of us, in a crucial test such as that to which Ezra was put on this occasion, would have applied to Artaxerxes for an escort of soldiers, and regarded it as the will of the Almighty to accept such a help. Most of us would probably have professed faith in God and relied on the swords and arrows of the Babylonian soldiers. But genuine faith is not content to rest its case upon such sophistries. It takes no decision by which the honor of God is compromised. Ezra considered that if he should ask for soldiers after he had told the King that the power of Jehovah would be his aid, the King would have just cause for the conclusion that the people of Jehovah have no more trust in their God than the pagans had in theirs. This would have been a reflection on God.

Ezra, having arrived at the conclusion that the only thing for him to do was to trust in God, divided the treasure between the chiefs in his company and charged them to take care each of the part entrusted to him. Then he started on the journey through the wilderness. And the outcome of it all was that Ezra was not

disappointed in his God. The record shows that the company arrived safely in Jernsalem, and nothing of the treasure they brought from Babylon was missing.

These are examples, from the Hebrew Scriptures, of faith. Many more could be adduced from the Book of Mormon. The history of the Church in our day contains some of the most impressive instances of faith in God ever recorded. Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, and all the Church leaders, and the Latter-day Saints generally, as a people, have set the world an example of faith which has earned for them undying fame in the annals of the Church of God.

The wisdom of man places too much reliance on the power of man. Faith relies on the arm of Jehovah.

To complete our attempt at forming a clear concept of what faith is, let us briefly consider the following propositions:

First, Faith, like every grace or talent with which man may be endowed, is the gift of God. But like every other gift it must be constantly exercised, or it will be withdrawn. You may have the gift of song or music, but if this gift is not cultivated, it is withdrawn. You may have the gifts and talents necessary to become a great artist, but if these are not developed by study and training, and patient labor, they will never bring any results. So it is with faith. God is willing enough to give it, but unless it is cultivated it will never develop in the soul to a power for salvation. The one who desires to excel as a musician must live with his notes and his instruments. The one who aims at a prominent place in the world of literature must live in his books. In the same way, the one who wants to become strong in faith must "walk with God," and learn to trust in Him for everything. It is by walking that we learn to walk; by swimming we learn to swim; it is by exercizing faith that we become strong in faith. No matter how weak it may be at first, by exercizing it, it will become stronger and stronger.

Secondly, Faith and trials always go together. I remember I heard many years ago of a good, noble woman, who had one misfortune after another. Sickness, poverty, death of her beloved ones were her experiences, as were those of Job, anciently. Naturally she more than once wondered why the all-merciful Father permitted the trials to multiply in her life, more than in the lives of so many she knew. One day her attention was arrested by the passage in the first epistle of Peter: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (I. Peter 1: 6, 7). Having read this remarkable explanation by the Apostle, in which he compares the trials of faith with the purifying of gold, she went to a goldsmith and asked him how often and how long he submitted his gold to

the fire. He happened to answer that he kept it in the fiery furnace until it was so clear that he could see his own image reflected therein. This was satisfactory to the tried child of God. She felt from that moment that her trials were only for the purpose of making her faith in God pure. That is the object of all our trials the Lord permits. They are to make us humble, forgiving, Christ-like in our characters, and fit for the company of celestial beings throughout all eternity.

Third, Our Lord forecasts as a characteristic of the last days a woeful lack of faith. "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith in the earth?" Never was there a time in the history of man in which it was more necessary to remember this question. We have creeds and philosophies without number. We have churches and missions, and benevolent societies; but where is that personal, living faith in the Savior that was kindled in the world on the day of Pentecost?

Great things will never be accomplished in the kingdom of God without that enthusiastic faith in Him. Give us more faith and we will have more men like Luther and Calvin, or John Knox, or Gustavus Adolphus, or Washington; men like Wesley or Whitfield, Spurgeon or Mueller, or the great martyrs of the last dispensation, Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum. Give us more faith, and the world will be won for the Son of God.

Finally, Faith helps us where science fails. Notwithstanding all progress, we realize there is a point beyond which human knowledge cannot penetrate; where, like children, we find ourselves at the end of our resources, feeling the need of the Power that is supreme in the universe. At this point faith gives us wings and we mount over all difficulties and soar toward the light of our divine origin, in ecstacy. Resting in the love and mercy of the Eternal Father, we look forward to that other sweet existence in which our knowledge shall attain greater perfection and help us to further development. In the words of the poet:

"Faith is strong—
Only when we are strong, shrinks when we shrink,
It comes when music stirs us and the chords
Moving on some grand climax shake our souls
With influx new that makes new energies.
It comes in swelling of the heart, and tears
That rise at noble and at gentle deeds—
At labors of the master artist's hand,
Which, trembling, touches to a finer end,
Trembling before an image seen within.
It comes in moments of heroic love,
Unjealous joy, in joy not made for us—
In conscious triumph of the good within
Making us worship goodness that rebukes."

J. M. S.

## IT ALL DEPENDS.

YES, it all depends upon how a person reads the book which the Latter-day Saints claim to be a revelation to man from God in the last days—the Book of Mormon—as to what effect it will have.

The elder of the Church who was primarily responsible for my acceptance of latter-day teachings, said to me one day, "Why don't you write your impression of the Book of Mormon to the *Millennial Star*," and with the hope that God may use these few thoughts to the bringing into the fold some who may be halting between two opinions, I venture to act upon the elder's suggestion. I repeat, it depends upon how the Book of Mormon is read as to the result of its perusal. (1) If read with the object of obtaining a further weapon with which to oppose and slander "Mormonism," no doubt Satan will be ready with some such weapon, even from the book itself; to the incredulous and carnal-minded reader the prejudice already existing will be increased and intensified. (2) Again, if read in a casual, off-handed manner, and with no definite object in view, except to see what it is like, it is hardly likely to awaken sufficient interest to lead to any good result, for it would probably be laid aside in a thoughtless manner, and never seriously taken up again. (3) But if read honestly, seriously, and carefully (surely such a claim as is made for it is worth this), with a humble prayer for wisdom, light and guidance, then the result will undoubtedly be the same as in my own case, and a strong conviction will be borne home to the heart and the intelligence that this is none other than a divine revelation, and the impartial reader, whose only desire is to know the truth, to find the true Church, to understand the correct, Christ-taught doctrines, will receive the light which he or she is asking for, and a marvelous revelation will follow.

Let me give you, dear reader, my own recent experience. I did for many years profess the religion of Jesus Christ, and sometimes enjoyed the favor of God, though often overcome by temptation, but still striving manfully over a long period to maintain the highest standard of Christian experience that my own weakness, the trials of life, and the tempter allowed. I had heard nothing but evil concerning the "Mormon" people until quite recently, when two elders of the Church, in the course of their missionary visitation (preaching the gospel, as far as they can, to every creature), came into my shop, and after a few polite remarks left me a tract to read. I treated them civilly, but with the usual plural wives question uppermost in my mind, so carefully and assiduously spread about by the enemies of truth. I read the tract and others which were left, and could not help the feeling that whatever the lives of these people were, their doctrines and Church government were certainly scriptural, and if a true Church

of Christ existed, this was nearest to it. My further investigations and conversations with the elders (who were most courteous and painstaking in explaining their principles, doctrines and conduct) resulted in my knowledge of the following facts concerning the Latter-day Saints, and certainly made an impression upon me in their favor:

1. They carried on a continuous house to house visitation regardless of insult, persecution and threats of violence.

2. Like myself, they neither smoked nor drank intoxicating liquors; and further, they took neither tea or coffee.

3. The elders and other officers of the Church were not paid for their labor.

4. They were good students and exponents of the scriptures, and appeared to be faithful in the discharge of their self-imposed task.

At any rate, on their suggestion, I promised, if the Book of Mormon was loaned to me, I would, without prejudice, read it and let them know the result, on the distinct understanding that I would not bind myself to accept its teaching or join the "Mormons" (I was afraid of being led astray).

Before reading it, however, I prayed earnestly to God for wisdom and guidance, and relying upon His promise that "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him," I commenced to read it. Now, note the result. I was first *mystified*, then *interested*, then *fascinated* (staying up late at night devouring its contents and getting into trouble with my wife as a consequence), finally, *heartily accepting it* as a *divine revelation*, and signing my name at the back of the book to that effect. I need scarcely say that the elder never received that book back again, for I gladly paid the modest price asked for it.

At each of the conversations following numbers of scripture passages that had been a mystery to me were explained by the doctrines of this Church and the interpretations made plain, thus confirming my faith, and when the elders presented me with a fresh publication which they called the Doctrine and Covenants, I was more than ever convinced that God had re-established His divinely-restored Church on earth again.

Can you wonder that after a clear revelation such as this I became a candidate for baptism and joined hands in membership with saints of latter days in the Church of Jesus Christ. I should have violated my conscience if I had done otherwise.

A word to the elders: Be faithful to your trust, there are others like me who are waiting for the kingdom of God, and who are misled by the false reports circulated about the true Church.

Doncaster. GEORGE REYNOLDS.

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SALVATION means a man's being placed beyond the power of all his enemies.—JOSEPH SMITH.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 1915.

EDITORIAL.

## AGAINST BELIEF.

THE United States Senate has just adopted an amendment to the Immigration bill excluding from the hospitable shores of that country all persons who believe in polygamy. The amendment reads:

"Polygamists or persons who believe in, advocate, or practice polygamy, shall be excluded from admission to the United States."

According to the law as it is now, those who believe in the *practice* of polygamy are excluded. If the amendment as adopted by the Senate becomes law, mere abstract belief in that institution disqualifies an immigrant for landing. The amendment was adopted against only three votes—the three being Senator Hughes of New Jersey, and Senators Smoot and Sutherland of Utah.

Senators Smoot and Sutherland opposed the amendment on the ground that it would bar a man from entering the United States merely because he entertained an abstract belief in a principle, even if he did not believe in its practice. Senator Smoot said, in part:

"Polygamy is a thing of the past, and it seems to me that this is the wrong time to try to cast reflection, because I cannot see it in any other light than as a reflection upon a people who have in good faith agreed that it should not be practiced. I do not want any special privileges for the members of my Church, but I do not believe that an immigrant should be barred because of a belief in the Bible, or a mere belief in a form of religion. That is the true situation of the 'Mormon' people as I understand it, Mr. President. If the senator from Missouri [Mr. Reed, who had charge of the amendment] knew the true belief of the 'Mormon' people, I do not believe he for one minute would try to keep that class of people out of the United States; for I want to say now, that there is not a more honest, a more industrious, a more God-fearing or liberty-loving people in all the United States than you will find the 'Mormon' people to be.

"I wish to say to the senator from Missouri that there would be no objection whatever to his amendment reading, 'or persons who believe in the practice of, or who advocate the practice of, polygamy,' as long as the laws of the land are opposed to polygamy. There is no good member of the 'Mormon' Church who is going to violate these laws."

Senator Hughes of New Jersey stated as a reason for his opposition that he did not believe religious belief of any kind should be made a test for admission to the United States.

It is more than probable that this legislative effort which, it may be supposed, originated in religious circles outside the Senate, is aimed at members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who apply for admission at the entrances to Uncle Sam's big domicile, but if so, it is absolutely useless. For, as Senator Smoot pointed out, as far as they are concerned, plural marriage is an issue of the past. The anti-polygamy laws were declared constitutional, by the Supreme Court, and that ended the controversy on that question. The Church has loyally submitted to the legally constituted authorities. The Senate amendment, therefore, does not in any way affect the Latter-day Saints. But it might affect immigrants of the Mohammedan faith; for they believe, according to the Koran, that a man may have as many as four wives, provided he can treat them all alike. Is the United States Senate prepared to exclude from the American shores the entire Mohammedan world because of the permission which the Arabian Prophet gave his followers, thirteen hundred years ago, with regard to their domestic relations?

But, aside from this consideration, legislation against abstract belief is a dangerous experiment in the United States. If such legislation is admitted, where will it stop? If Congress can bar Mohammedans from entering the United States on account of their belief, it can exclude Catholics for the same reason; for instance, for their adherence to the doctrine concerning the temporal power of the Pope. And if it can exclude Mohammedans and Catholics, on such pretexts, it can close the door to infidels, or to adherents of the Mosaic faith. If it can make *belief* in polygamy a test for admission, it can make belief in the atonement, or belief in the Trinity, or any other belief, a similar test. If it has authority to put up theological tests, why not philosophical? What prevents Congress from saying that an admirer of Kant, or a Darwinist, cannot enter the United States? It is unreasonable to suppose that Congress has the authority to make such laws, and yet that follows necessarily from the assumption that it can legislate concerning men's belief. It is a dangerous experiment, for it opens the doors wide to bigotry and fanaticism. Let Congress confine itself to legislation against men's practices. That is its province.

Neither Greece nor Rome, in ancient days of power, undertook to prohibit men from believing. Tyranny never went to that length. The persecutions of Rome were directed against religious practices which were considered dangerous to the state. The United States, under whose flag the oppressed of all nations have found an asylum and freedom to worship according to the dictates of conscience, cannot afford to stain its glorious past by the adoption of measures which would cause even the tyrants of old to protest from the realm of the dead, if that were possible. Every state has the right, and duty, to protect its citizens from

practices that would injure others, but not to inquire into beliefs. That is the province of the church.

It will be interesting to see whether Congress will pass this Senate amendment, and, if so, whether President Wilson will, by his signature, make it a part of the law of the United States.

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It is learned from papers received after the foregoing was written and in type, that the House of Representatives, by a vote of one hundred and forty-one to thirty-seven, rejected the Senate amendment. Congressman Gardner, who had the bill in charge, said: "The Senate amendment I do not like because it undertakes to go into a man's mind and find out wheter he believes in polygamy as a part of his creed, no matter whether his creed contemplates a polygamy in some blessed hereafter or in this world. I have no objection whatever to the exclusion of any man who believes in the practice of polygamy in this world, but that is not what the Senate has provided in this amendment." There is now no prospect that the Senate amendment will become law. The debate on this question has, however, called attention to the fact that under the present law abstract belief in a principle does not exclude an alien from the United States; but belief in a practice which is contrary to law does. This point is not always clear to intended immigrants.

J. M. S.

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## WHY PREACH TO CHRISTIANS?

THE question is frequently asked, "Why do not the 'Mormon' missionaries spend their time and means in pagan countries, instead of trying to convert Christians, and especially Protestants?" These, it is said, do not need the attention of missionaries. They have the Bible, a Christian ministry, churches, religions and benevolent societies in great numbers, and need no more.

We would like to ask those who object to "Mormon" missionary work in so-called Christian countries, if they ever endeavored to find an answer to the question why our Lord came to the world through the Hebrew race. The Hebrews were among the nations of the earth the most advanced, religiously. They had the Old Testament, the Temple, synagogues, and a priesthood, and they had a theology which in theory was without fault. Why did our Lord come to them and not to the barbarians outside the pale of civilization? Why did He send His disciples to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel," and why did He enjoin them not to go into the way of the Gentiles or the cities of the Samaritans (Matt. 10: 5, 6)? And why, when, after the resurrection, He commissioned them to preach to all creatures, did He command them to begin at Jerusalem?

The reason for this seems to be clear. The Jews were, to some extent, prepared. For centuries they had been trained for the coming of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In fact, their special education for that great event began when Abraham was called out of the city of Haran and directed to go to the Land of Promise. It continued throughout the entire history of the nation until the fulness of time, when our Lord came in the flesh. There was not another nation on earth in which the foundations of the kingdom of heaven could have been laid. The Jews understood what faith is, for they had the history of Abraham before them. They knew something about repentance, baptism, and the operations of the Holy Ghost. They had the Ten Commandments, the Law of Sacrifice, and the Priesthood, and they could understand the messengers of the Nazarene, when they spoke of virtue, sin, justification, propitiation, immortality, the fatherhood of God, and the kingdom of heaven. True, the ecclesiastical leaders of the Jews rejected the Messiah and persecuted His messengers; but there were thousands of good, honest souls in the nation who accepted the gospel and formed a strong central church from which the truth was diffused gradually throughout the world. To that extent the Jews were prepared for the gospel, as no other nation was, and that was the reason why the message of salvation was first sent to them.

There is a similar reason why the gospel in our day and generation is sent first to the nations that are, at least nominally, Christian. As Christians they know something about the laws and ordinances of the kingdom of heaven, and through the prophetic word they have been directed to look for the establishment of that kingdom on earth, if they have given heed to its teachings. They have been taught to call upon God as their father, and they, therefore, can understand the gospel that teaches His fatherhood and the brotherhood of man, if they will pay attention to it. The Protestant world particularly has had the religious training, through the providence of God, which enables the honest in heart to understand and accept the gospel message. The pagan nations have not had that training. It is very difficult to make a Mohammedan comprehend the spiritual teachings of the gospel. It is almost impossible to make a pagan, who perhaps is a pantheist, or who never was trained to see beyond the very narrow limits of the material world, comprehend anything spiritual. A pupil, in order to master the teachings of the higher classes in the school, must first pass through the lower classes. The same holds true in the great school of God. "Mormonism," so-called, presents the most advanced stage of religious teaching. The training through which the Christian nations have passed leads up to it, as is easily perceived if we consider how the Reformation made possible the foundation of the American Republic, and the adoption of laws and a form of government under which the Church could be estab-

lished, for which great event the wonderful Anglo-Saxon civilization, of which Great Britain has been, and is, a standard-bearer, was but a preparation.

The gospel comes first to the nations who are prepared for it; but its ultimate destiny is to fill the entire world.

J. M. S.

## MINUTES OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONFERENCE.

THE annual conference of the South African mission was held at the Latter-day Saints' Mission Hall, 23 Church Street, Woodstock, Cape Colony, Sunday, December 20th, 1914. There were in attendance: Mission President Nicholas G. Smith who presided; President James H. Ockey of the Bloemfontein conference; President Walter H. Matthews of the Transvaal conference, together with the other elders of the mission, fourteen in all.

The morning services convened at 10 o'clock. Opened by singing, "Come, come, ye saints." Elder William L. Barker offered the opening prayer. Singing, "Praise to the man who communed with Jehovah."

President Nicholas G. Smith said he was thankful that our conference had commenced under such favorable conditions, and that all the elders had made the long journey here in safety. He said that the elders of Israel gathered here this morning are fine specimens of manhood; that they keep the Word of Wisdom and are free from the sins of the world, and have sacrificed much to come to this land and preach the gospel of our Savior.

President James H. Ockey of the Bloemfontein conference was the next speaker. He said that his mission work had given him more joy than any work he had been permitted to take part in. He spoke earnestly of the glorious principles of the gospel, and pointed out that the elders on this platform, though they come from varied walks of life, are teaching the same doctrines, and when they leave Cape Town for their fields of labor, it would be with the same spirit that Paul left Damascus—a spirit of love for their fellowmen.

President Walter H. Matthews of the Transvaal conference then addressed the meeting. He said that even at the beginning of the conference he felt well paid for coming so far. He called attention to the present conditions of the world, pointing out that when the gospel the elders of Israel are preaching has penetrated the hearts of men and the house of Israel are gathered together, we can look with anticipation to the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah, when "the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the sucking child play on the hole of the asp"; when men will love their fellowmen as themselves and there will be "one Shepherd and one fold."

Elder Frank D. Price, who has been laboring in the Transvaal

conference, expressed his joy in being here. He related some of his experiences in journeying to this land, saying, that when informed at Liverpool that he was to travel alone, he was tempted not to come, but a feeling of restlessness came on him there; he knew this was the land he had been called to by the servants of the Lord, and he felt assured that if he did his part the Lord would land him here safely. He then related an incident in answer to prayer which has added greatly to his testimony.

Elder Orville W. Cutler of the Cape conference then spoke, taking up the subject of patience, pointing out its place and benefits among the Latter-day Saints in helping them to live the gospel and endure the trials that come to all who follow the example of our Savior. He then related the legend of "The Desert of Waiting," concluding with the thought that patience would win much for us in the kingdom of heaven.

Elder Leland S. Tate of the Transvaal conference said he was happy to again meet with his brethren and the saints in conference, and enjoy the fellowship that is causing the observing people of the world to take notice. He then made reference to the opening song, "Come, come, ye saints," and pointed out its purpose and place in the hearts of the Latter-day Saints. He said he rejoiced in being an ambassador of Christ to the people of this land, to call them from the ways of the world, and bear his testimony to them.

After singing, "Do what is right," the benediction was pronounced by Elder Milton P. Fletcher.

The second session assembled at 2 p.m. Singing, "Guide us, O Thou Great Jehovah." Prayer was offered by Elder Gerald M. Steed. Continued by singing, "Behold the great Redeemer die."

The sacrament was administered by Elders James H. Ockey and June B. Sharp, assisted by Deacons T. Y. Wilson and F. Anderson.

The names of the general authorities of the Church were read and sustained by a unanimous vote; also President Nicholas G. Smith as president of the South African mission, the elders in their appointments, and the local Priesthood and officers of the mission. All were sustained by a unanimous vote.

Elder Francis E. Hulet of the Bloemfontein conference was the first speaker. He said he had enjoyed his labors in this land, and emphasized the importance of laying up treasures in heaven, and not on earth, making his thoughts clear by relating a few examples.

Elder William L. Barker of the Bloemfontein conference spoke on obedience, giving several references and instances of this important commandment of God to His children on earth, as recorded in the Bible. He then gave examples of our Savior's obedience to His Father's commandments, saying that obedience to the commandments of God as revealed to us in this day is necessary to our salvation.

We were then favored with a violoncello solo, "The Rosary," (Nevin), by Elder Gerald M. Steed, Sister Florence G. Smith acting as accompanist.

Elder William H. Lindsay of the Transvaal conference then addressed us, saying he was glad to again meet with his brethren and the saints in conference; that such gatherings are essential to keep us supplied with spiritual food. He then took up the apostasy from the primitive church of Christ, referring to several passages in Holy Writ to make his thoughts clear.

Elder June B. Sharp of the Cape conference spoke upon revelation, showing the need of more of God's word on earth in these days, and giving scriptural references from both the Jewish and Nephite records. He made plain to us the origion of the Book of Mormon, showing that it is the "stick of Joseph," as referred to by the Prophet Ezekiel, and it and the "stick of Judah," or Bible, should be one in the hands of the Lord in these last days.

After singing, "I need Thee every hour," benediction was pronounced by Elder B. Glen Kenney.

The closing session of the conference convened at 7:30 p.m. Commenced by singing, "Though deep'ning trials." Prayer was offered by Elder Orville W. Cutler. Singing, "O my Father."

Elder Milton P. Fletcher of the Bloemfontein conference was the first speaker. He said he was glad to meet with the saints of this branch—a desire that he had entertained for the past two years. He took up the topic of the established religions of the warring nations of Europe; noting that only two nations predominate in one religion, and they are on opposing sides. He briefly outlined the Reformation period, pointing out the origin of many churches and how their names were derived, and that of all these none were named the Church of Jesus Christ—the name by which the Apostle Paul says the Church of Christ will be known.

Elder Gerald M. Steed of the Cape conference said he could heartily endorse all that had been said by the speakers during this and the previous sessions. He said that if he did not know for a certainty the truthfulness of this latter-day work, he did not know where he would find a pure religion; that he could not stand to be galled by the nonsense in the world to-day under the cloak of religion.

We were then favored with a vocal solo, "A perfect day" (Carrie Jacobs-Bond) by Elder June B. Sharp, with 'cello and piano accompaniment.

Elder Willis E. Spafford of the Cape conference was the next speaker, saying that he had learned that there was a feeling of fellowship that is characteristic of all Latter-day Saint gatherings, whether there be many or few present. He emphasized the importance of our seeking for and entertaining the love of God, and then bore a strong testimony of the truth of the gospel.

Elder B. Glen Kenney of the Bloemfontein conference followed,

expressing his pleasure in gathering in conference. He then pointed out to us, giving references in Holy Writ, that there was a falling away from the Church of Christ, but emphasized its restoration through the Prophet Joseph Smith in this dispensation, as predicted by the Prophet Daniel and others. The truth, he said, though crushed, has again risen by the power of God, never to be taken away or given to another people.

President Nicholas G. Smith said he felt that all had been well paid for their efforts in attending the meetings; that the instructions given and the testimonies borne should help us all to live better lives and ever remain true to the faith. He thanked the saints for their kindness in caring for the elders. He reported an increase in tithes and offerings during the fiscal year, and that the mission in general was in a good condition.

After singing, "We thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet," the benediction was pronounced by President Nicholas G. Smith.

President Nicholas G. Smith met with the elders of the mission in Priesthood meeting at mission headquarters, December 19th, 1914, when reports were read and instructions given pertaining to the mission, including the assignments to fields of labor.

GERALD M. STEED.

## TRUTH AND THEOLOGY.

WHAT a simple word "truth" is! Yet, who has surveyed its boundary? Who has estimated its width or depth? Who has stated its origin? Who has defined it?

There is but one other word as difficult to comprehend as is truth, and that is theology, the science which teaches us of God and of truth, and which deals with the existence of a God and of angels; with the condition under which, and the means by which, divine revelation is imparted; with the eternal principles governing the creation of worlds; and with the laws of nature in all their varied manifestations.

Theology is the systematic exhibition of revealed truth, the science of Christian faith and life. It has to do with other truths than those which are specifically called spiritual. Its domain is co-extensive with that of truth. The comprehensive study of theology, therefore, would embrace all truths known (or unknown to man). God has constituted Himself as the great Teacher by personal manifestations, or through the labors of His appointed servants. He instructs His mortal children in all industrial pursuits that benefit mankind, in arts that please and refine, in the sciences that enlarge and exalt the mind. To Adam He taught the art of agriculture (Gen. 2: 8; Pearl of Great Price, Moses 3: 15), and by example He taught our first parents to make clothes (Gen. 3: 21). Moses and Nephi received instruction in architecture (Ex. 25, 26, 27; I. Nephi 17: 8).

In a word, God is the source of all truth. And no one believes that man has received from that divine source all the light that is needed upon these arts and sciences mentioned. In fact, if an individual should suggest that all the information that a modern student can obtain is already had and is written in the books of art and science, he would immediately be denounced as a fool. But at the same time men who call themselves learned ministers, divines, doctors of religion, expounders of the great plan of salvation, will declare that the volume of Scriptnre is full and complete, and that never again will God speak to man, or the heavens reveal more light (truth).

Compare the definition of truth given above with the following: "Trnth is to know things as they have been; to know things as they are; and to know things as they will be." This is the definition accepted by the Latter-day Saints; therefore we sing:

"Then, say, what is truth? 'Tis the last and the first,
For the limits of time it steps o'er:
Though the heavens depart, and the earth's fountains burst,
Truth, the sum of existence will weather the worst,
Eternal, unchanged, evermore."

Surely that which is, that which has been and that which is to come, mnst be the sum of existence, or absolute truth. And God being the sonrce of truth; we believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Nottingham. GILBERT TAYSOM.

## DIED.

BIRKHEAD.—January 11th, 1915, Albert Kellet Birkhead, the beloved son of Fred and Sarah Kellet Birkhead; born at Silkstone Common, November 28th, 1914; blessed by Joseph O. Stone, December 16th, 1914. The remains were interred in the Silkstone cemetery, January 14th, 1915.

JEFFERY.—At Bradford, January 5th, 1915, Fanny Jeffery, aged 50 years. Deceased was baptized July 2nd, 1904, by Elder Rex P. Winder, and was a faithful member of the Church.

BARCLEY.—At Liverpool, January 15th, 1915, Alexander Barcley; born January 18th, 1901; baptized March 24th, 1910, by Elder Alfred Parsons.

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